

between public and private morality was recognized. Nations were coming into existence, but sovereignty in the juridical sense was unknown. For in ecclesiastical affairs the Roman Church was supreme, and the noble conception of a Respublica Christiana coloured the thought of the Western world. There stood the Holy Roman Empire, with God the invisible King, and the appointed representatives on earth, the Emperor and the Pope. It was an age of divided allegiance, not of concentration of power. The texture was too loose to stand the strain of conflicting interests, and after all 'order is heaven's first law. The nation-state came in with the Renaissance and the Reformation. The rejection of Papal authority by Northern Europe strengthened the power of the ruler, and enthroned the notion of a government supreme within its frontiers. The state grew steadily in strength and prestige, in Catholic as well as in Protestant countries, as the Church and the great nobility wilted away. But in what spirit was it to use its power? In the Middle Ages political science was a branch of Christian theology, the "principles of which were regarded as at any rate theoretically valid over the whole field of human experience. These times were over. The doctrine of partnership in a wider unity based on the recognition of common principles had disappeared. Its place was taken by the maxim of unfettered sovereignty, the overriding interest of the state as interpreted by its ruler.

The sixteenth century is the Augustan age of Machiavellian statecraft. Thomas Cromwell, the unscrupulous instrument of Henry Vm, brought the cult back from Italy and was rumoured to sleep with a copy of *The Prince* under his pillow. The daughter of the man, to whom the book was dedicated was Catherine de Medici, who massacred thousands of

Protestants, not from religious zeal but for coolly
calculated
purposes of state. It was said of her son Henri
Id that he
carried the volume in his pocket. Though it was
afterwards
pkced on the Index of Forbidden Books it was
first published
in Rome, and sixteenth-century Popes were as
ready to approve
the dagger of the assassin as secular rulers.
When Fra Paolo
Sarpi was stabbed in Venice he coolly observed
agnosco stilum
curia. Though, the name of the Renaissance
publicist became
a byword for infamy, for many a ruler his
precepts were the
accepted methods of the political game. Bacon,
whose blood
was as cool as his brain was clear, did not
hesitate to pay
homage to the formuktor of the doctrine
ofraison d'etat. " We